



# Fact Sheet

## Fact Sheet No. 2

### *Preparing for a Flood*

If you live in a floodplain area there are many things you can do to prepare for the next flood that will save you time, money, or your life. Following is a partial list you can accomplish:

- Determine whether your property is in a floodplain or downstream of a dam. If it is determine the elevation of the property in relation to nearby streams and other waterways. This information is available from building inspectors/zoning administrators. If below a dam know the warning system for evacuation in the event of dam failure.
- Learn and practice the safest route from your home or business to high ground.
- Know where community evacuation shelters are located.
- Buy flood insurance and examine claim procedures.
- Itemize personal belongings to facilitate insurance claims.
- Install check or backup valves in building to prevent floodwater from backing up sewer lines
- Prepare an itemized list of personal items you will need if you must evacuate (medicines, prescriptions, clothing, special foods needed for infants, etc.).
- Keep important documents in a flood free safety deposit box.
- Monitor local radio and television stations for flood warnings.
- Make provisions for pets or livestock.
- 

#### When Flooding is Imminent

- Evacuate ASAP if living in a flash flood warning area.
- Elevate or move furniture to a higher floor.
- Fill and anchor tanks to keep them from floating away.
- Grease immovable machinery.
- Turn off electricity, gas, and water at main switch and valves. Label where these are located and teach responsible members of the family where they are located.
- Bring outside possessions inside the house, or tie them down securely.
- Keep gas tank in vehicle(s) at least half-full.
- Pack personal evacuation kit.
- If home will not be evacuated or not directly impacted by flood.
  - o Draw water and store in air tight containers
  - o Have a supply of non-perishable food on hand,
  - o Have flashlights with spare batteries, portable radio, first aid kit, fire extinguisher, and emergency cooking equipment in working order.

#### **DIVISION OF DAM SAFETY & FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT**

Phone: 804-371-6095

#### **FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM:**

- ✓ *Planning & Enforcement Assistance*
- ✓ *Flood Insurance*
- ✓ *Technical & Flood-proofing Assistance*
- ✓ *Cooperating Technical Partners*
- ✓ *Map Modernization & Prioritization*
- ✓ *Substantial Damages & Increased Cost of Compliance*
- ✓ *Community Rating System*
- ✓ *No Adverse Impact*
- ✓ *Workshops*

Floodplain Program Manager:  
Corey Garyotis (804) 786-8073  
[corey.garyotis@dcv.virginia.gov](mailto:corey.garyotis@dcv.virginia.gov)

Floodplain Program Planner  
Mark Slauter (804) 371-6135  
[mark.slauter@dcv.virginia.gov](mailto:mark.slauter@dcv.virginia.gov)

Floodplain Program Engineer  
David Gunn (804) 786-1369  
[david.gunn@dcv.virginia.gov](mailto:david.gunn@dcv.virginia.gov)

DCR Floodplain Mgt. Program  
[www.state.va.us/dcr/sw/floodpln.htm](http://www.state.va.us/dcr/sw/floodpln.htm)



# VIRGINIA'S FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

## ***Fact Sheet No. 2 (continued)*** ***Preparing for a Flood***

### **DURING FLOOD CONDITIONS**

It is essential to understand that floods are hazardous. The peril is no less if your neighborhood is covered with a foot, or under twelve feet of water.

#### **Things to do include:**

- The safety of your family is the most important consideration since floodwaters can rise rapidly. Keep the family together so you can evacuate if necessary.
- If evacuation appears necessary, turn all utilities at the main switch and close the main gas valve. Secure your home before leaving.
- If car stalls in a flooded area abandon it as soon as possible. Floodwaters can rise rapidly and sweep a car (and its occupants) away.
- Listen to radio for information of flood conditions.
- Follow instructions of emergency personnel.
- Keep children out of flood waters (no playing therein.)
- Watch out for fallen electrical wires, open manholes, etc.
- Be sensitive to the emotional condition of family members.
- Make plans for recovery.

#### **Things not to do:**

- Use foods that have come in contact with floodwater.
- Cross a flowing stream where water is above your knees.
- Drive where floodwater is extensive over the roads. Parts of the road may be washed out.
- Play or wade flooded streets.
- Operate electrical equipment in floodwater.
- Panic

### **WHAT TO DO AFTER A FLOOD**

When returning to a flooded home or business, focus on personal safety, building hazards, cleanup, and mitigation.

#### **Person Safety**

- Get a tetanus shot. Wear protective gloves and boots. No wading.
- Find out water contamination level and take necessary precautions.
- Look out for "critters" like snakes. Use a stick to lift debris.
- Don't overexert. Many deaths due to flooding occur during cleanup.
- Don't use electrical appliances until cleaned and repaired.
- Don't underestimate emotional stress. Use counseling resources.
- Have children stay out of flooded area.
- Salvage only canned foods and even then exercise extreme care.



# VIRGINIA'S FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

## ***Fact Sheet No. 2 (continued)*** ***Preparing for a Flood***

### **Building Hazards**

- Contact local official for permission to reoccupy flooded building.
- Make sure gas is turned off and don't light matches until then.
- Make sure electricity is turned off.
- Do not pump basement water all at once. Groundwater pressure against walls may cause them to collapse. Pump over several days.
- Report loose power lines to Power Company.
- Schedule appointment with insurance agent A.S.A.P.

### **Cleanup and Salvage**

Prioritized cleanup tasks. .

#### High priorities

- Store damaged contents on premises for adjuster to inspect
- Heating and cooling system components must be cleaned and. Do not operate until inspected by certified technician.
- Open up doors and windows for circulation of air.
- Store valuable papers, works of art, paintings, etc. in cold storage to prevent mildew until they can be restored by an expert.
- Dry books by opening them and standing on end.
- Wooden furniture may warp if dried in direct sunlight. Dry in shade.
- Clean metal A.S.A.P. After dried, wipe with an oiled cloth.

#### Medium Priorities

- Let wooden floors dry naturally to curtail cracking and splitting
- Drill hole in wall near floor between studs to drain water.
- Wash with detergent or sanitizing solution (One or two tablespoons of laundry bleach to 1 gallon of water at room temperature.)
- If burners and other motors are to be salvaged seek guidance from Certified technician. Hose down sediment.

#### Low priorities

- Shovel and hose down sediment while wet.
- Wash upholstered furniture.
- Clean rugs thoroughly then lay out to dry. Consider professional.
- Mattresses, pillows and stuffed furniture may be a lost cause.

### **Mitigation**

Steps to be taken to avoid a repeat of flooding devastation.

- Elevate building above flood level on pilings or fill.
- Elevate furnace and utilities above flood level.
- Install flood proofing devices such as "flood shields" across doors
- Store keepsakes in watertight container or above flood level.
- Install check valves in sewer line and buy sewer backup insurance.
- Relocate structure out of floodplain.
- Buy flood insurance.

